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Front Door, Back Door, Side Door

How do people choose a church, when do people stay, why do people leave?

developed by Rev. Elder Don Eastman and James Birkitt, Jr.; revised 26 October, 1997

This workshop will explore three stages of involvement individuals have with a church:

1. **Attraction** of seekers to your church
2. **Inclusion** of newcomers into membership
3. **Mobilization** of members into ministry

First, some foundational questions:

Who are you as a church?

This is the question of *purpose*. Peter Drucker, the great management expert of the twentieth century says, "The first task of management is to ask the question: what is our business and what should it be?" What is your reason for being? Why does your church exist? What difference would it make if your church ceased to exist tomorrow? (see Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Church*) What are your mandates for mission and ministry? What is the meaning of the "Great Commission" and "Great Commandment" in your church. What is God calling your church to be and to be doing in the years ahead?

What do you have to offer?

This is the question of *position*. What makes your church distinctive from other churches? What is your philosophy of ministry, as reflected in values and vision, mission and ministries? Do you see your church as a lighthouse and safe harbor or as search and rescue boats?

Who are you trying to impress?

This is the question of *people*. Which people are you trying to serve? What are their needs? Are your ministry priorities and activities directed primarily to church members...or to the unchurched? Unchurched who? *The Lesbian and Gay Community*? Or do you see sub sets of peoples with distinctive needs within the population you consider your likely constituency?

Ten trends impacting your ministry today and tomorrow:

1. Declining membership of mainline denominations
2. Declining loyalty to denominations/churches
3. Emergence of the mega-churches
4. Growth of MCC
5. The Boomers: a generation of shoppers and seekers
6. Generation X: new passions for spirituality
7. The global charismatic movement
8. The Internet and other Information Age technology
9. The changing face of HIV/AIDS
10. The globalization and reinventing of organizations

Growth in the U.S. Churches of the UFMCC

Since 1968 when Metropolitan Community Church was founded, some very dramatic changes have been taking place in churches, especially in the United States. Many mainline denominations have seen significant decline in membership, while some of the younger and evangelical denominations have experienced substantial growth.

In the UFMCC, each year since 1968 has seen an increase in church membership. In fact, by comparison to other denominations, the UFMCC has been one of the world's fastest growing religious movements during the past three decades.

One important way in which to look at church growth is the number of churches that are growing versus those at a numerical plateau or declining in membership. The following study of five major denominations in the United States provides an interesting comparison with the growth of MCC congregations:

*Percent of Churches Growing, Plateaued, or Declining: 1983-1988**

	Growing	Plateaued	Declining
Southern Baptist Convention	30.5%	51.9%	17.6%
Assemblies of God	38.3%	25.4%	36.3%
American Baptist Convention	19.0%	47.0%	32.4%
United Church of Christ	18.0%	52.6%	29.3%
Presbyterian Church (USA)	16.2%	41.4%	42.4%
Metropolitan Community Churches*	57.9%	11.6%	30.5%

*Note: Growing churches are those with greater than 10% membership growth, plateaued churches experience between less than 10% growth to not more than 10% loss in membership and declining churches had more than 10% loss in membership. UFMCC data is for the years 1988-1993, and is based upon reports of the Board of Pensions (USA). Other data is cited in *Church & Denominational Growth* by Roozen and Hadaway (1993: Abingdon Press, p.79).

Another way of looking at church growth is in terms of the net increase (or decline) in membership. The following data is taken from various annual editions of the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches. Again, MCC data for the years 1988-1993 is based upon reports of the Board of Pensions (USA).

Five-year Membership Growth Rates: 1985-1990

Southern Baptist Convention	3.9%
Assemblies of God	5.1%
United Church of Christ	-5.0%
Episcopal Church	-10.7%
Church of God (Cleveland, TN)	18.5%
Christian and Missionary Alliance	22.5%
UFMCC (1988-1993)	28.7%

U.S. Population Growth (1985-1990)	4.8%
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Resources on Trends Impacting Your Ministry

compiled by Rev. Elder Don Eastman, updated 11 November 1997

Highly recommended:

Anderson, Leith, *Dying For Change: The New Realities Confronting Churches* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1990) This text on how to effect change that builds and strengthens the local church includes very readable and helpful chapters on the Baby Boomer and Baby Buster generations.

Barna, George, *Baby Busters: The Disillusioned Generation* (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 1994) A comprehensive analysis and examination of the post-Boomer age group (1965-1983) based upon data gathered by the Barna Research Group.

Cox, Harvey, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1995) A remarkable book on the impact of the global pentecostal movement. Cox is also the author of the influential book *The Secular City* (1965)

Easum, William M., *How To Reach Baby Boomers* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991) A leading church growth author offers ideas on how churches can effectively attract and integrate members of the baby boom generation (born between 1946-1964) whose needs are not being met by traditional churches.

Miller, Craig Kennet, *Postmoderns: the beliefs hopes & fears of young americans* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996) This is a very informative description and discussion of the generation born between 1965 and 1981. The author is director of new congregational development for the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church.

Roof, Wade Clark, *A Generation of Seekers* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993) Subtitled "The Spiritual Journeys of The Baby Boom Generation," this is a landmark study of how the generation born between 1946 and 1964 is turning to religion in their search for meaning and values in a complex world.

Roozen, David A. and Hadaway, C. Kirk, ed., *Church & Denominational Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993) The subtitle to this collection of articles by various religion sociologists and development experts is "What does (and does not) cause growth and decline?" This is an update of an earlier volume (1979) by the same title. Provides good sociological analysis on the difference between the numerically growing religious bodies in North America and those that are shrinking in size.

Schaller, Lyle, *The New Reformation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995) North America's leading expert on church development glimpses at the church of the 21st century, identifying 21 signs of a new reformation and raising 21 important questions for churches of the 21st century. Other recent excellent books by the same author and publisher are *21 Bridges To The 21st Century* (1994), *Tattered Trust: Is There Hope For Your Denomination* (1996), and *The Interventionist* (1997).

Snyder, Howard, *EarthCurrents* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995) This is kind of a biblically informed counterpart to the book *Megatrends*. It includes a descriptive analysis of global trends and discussion of worldviews which are emerging or failing.

Sweet, Leonard, *Faithquakes* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994) The author suggests new directions for churches in response to the major social earthquakes brought with the collapse of the Enlightenment or "Modern era" (hence the term "postmodern") and the advent of the information age.

Vaughan, John N., *Megachurches & America's Cities: How Churches Grow* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993) A good description and discussion of the phenomenon of megachurches. A megachurch is defined by an average weekly worship attendance of 2000 or more. Included is a great chapter listing 19 predictable changes in growing churches.

Benchmarks of Excellence In The Church

Rev. Elder Don Eastman

In the August, 1996 meeting of the Strategic Growth Initiative Team we discussed the idea of establishing benchmarks of excellence for local churches. Six categories were identified as important functional areas where quality benchmarks could be useful. Following the meeting, Michael Piazza and his staff did some work in further defining these benchmark areas, and he sent each member of the SGI Team a summary and asked that we rank these areas in order of importance. As I struggled to rank the importance of each area, I came to the realization (especially from some recent reading on systems theory) that areas tend to impact each other, therefore, it was frequently difficult to set such values. This document and process was very useful in stimulating some other thinking for me, and here are some reflections that I offer to continue our discussion of what I believe is a very exciting direction.

There are two books which I believe can help inform our discussion of the development of benchmarks for excellence in the local church. The first is *Benchmarks of Quality in the Church* by Norman Shawchuck and Gustave Rath. This book, drawing heavily from the ideas of Total Quality Management (TQM) and systems theory, suggests 21 qualities in seven categories, each with a definition, examples, diagnostic questions and implementation suggestions. The second is *Beyond Quality: New Standards of Total Performance The Can Change The Future of Corporate America* by Jerry Bowles and Joshua Hammond. *Beyond Quality* is rich in discussion of both the success and limitations of the popular quest for quality by corporations in America, and presents some elements beyond quality that are required for the ultimate success of business organizations.

One of the issues to be raised is the definition of the term "benchmarks," and how are they identified or developed? *Benchmarks of Quality in the Church* simply states "A benchmark is an established point either to take off from, or to return to. A benchmark is a point of reference for measuring...." *Beyond Quality* defines benchmarking as "picking the best of the best techniques," and as "studying the best in the world at a particular function and adopting that approach as the standard." Xerox is cited as a company which pioneered this technique through benchmarking teams which used a ten-step model to study a number of America's most successful companies. Perhaps we may want to clarify the functional categories for churches, then begin to identify individual churches best at each function from which a standard can be developed. The Xerox model (copy attached) may be useful in doing this.

Another question is: What is the basis or criteria for defining "quality" or "excellence?" Here, Shawchuck and Rath are helpful. They point out the difference between the process of quality (how quality is achieved) and the content of quality (what comprises quality). TQM, in business, assumes that if an institution can master the process of quality, then the content of quality will be automatically achieved. They believe, however, the pattern is reversed for religious institutions; an understanding of the content of quality by a congregation is prerequisite to an effective process of quality. Therefore, their 21 benchmarks (called qualities), focus on the *content* of a church's ministry. (Note the attached summary).

Beyond Quality sees the quality revolution as evolving through four incremental stages of continuous improvement: 1) technical quality, which is an internal focus on products or processes, doing things right by relying on tools, technology and process; 2) functional quality is an external process which focuses on customer satisfaction by relying on people and human judgements; 3) competitive quality brings focus to the total market, not just the existing product/service or existing customer base by relying on flexibility; and, 4) forward quality, an emerging concept, is synonymous with innovation. It focuses on new markets, new worlds, and the broadening of product/service offerings. It relies on long-term planning and recruits/retains customers by building a relationship of trust.

From this vantage point, I believe the work of Kennon L. Callahan could become foundational in creating basic categories to establish our own "Benchmarks of Excellence" His book, *Twelve Keys To An Effective Church* presents twelve key areas, some of which encompass each of the benchmark areas that we identified in our last meeting (a summary of these areas is also attached.) Callahan's approach, as that of Shawchuck and Rath, is diagnostic. We could build three diagnostic models, one for the small single cell church, another for medium size churches, and a third for larger, multiple-staff churches. (These are the sizes most relevant for MCCs today. Future growth of much larger churches would require additional models.) An important premise of these models is that they will be dynamic and evolutionary.

Lyle Schaller has said that one of the most valuable contributions a denomination can make to local churches is asking the right questions. A diagnostic approach to benchmarks of excellence would take the form of a self directed audit for local churches. In each of the identified benchmark categories, a series of diagnostic questions would be asked. Answers could be anticipated and appropriate resources developed for improving quality. Interestingly, in the field of risk management, many of our local churches are now using a self directed audit (at least two districts are requiring it for charter or commission review) which is dramatically improving their performance in this area. Such an instrument would be invaluable in our work with target churches.

One approach to defining and developing these benchmarks would be to begin with Callahan's twelve key areas, then integrating the qualities identified by Shawchuck and Rath, as well as the work Mike Piazza and the COH staff did on our identified areas. Next, we could refine the parameters of quality by identifying churches (MCC and otherwise) that achieve the highest quality in the respective area. (I don't think it matters whether we end up with ten or twelve or more, nor do I think we need to retain the identical areas of Callahan. We obviously need to modify them. Having said that, they are pretty good.)

For example, take Callahan's first area: *Specific Concrete Missional Objectives*. Here I would draw from the *Religious Qualities* of Shawchuck and Rath. The key question is does the church have a clear sense of vision and statement of mission rooted in coherent, credible theology and other values, as well as a clear, consistent and attractive philosophy of ministry? For me, in any church that I would pastor, this would always include (as in the Statement of Purpose of COH) the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, and Rev. Perry's concept of a Christian Salvation, Christian Social Action and Christian Community.

Xerox Ten-Step Benchmarking Model

Note: The following is summarized as cited by Jerry Bowles and Joshua Hammond in *Beyond Quality* (New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group, 1992).

1. *Identify what is to be benchmarked.* A team selects a product, a service, a process or a practice, or even a level of customer satisfaction. The goal is to determine whether the area of interest is managed in the best possible way.
2. *Identify comparative companies.* Benchmarking partners can be other operating units within the company, competitors, or noncompetitors who are judged to be the leaders in the area being benchmarked.
3. *Determine data collection method and collect data.* In true "apples-to-apples" fashion, teams determine what measurements will be used in the benchmarking process. Then a trip is often made to the selected company, and face-to-face exchanges are conducted with principals in both firms. Often, a tour of the benchmarked area is included.
4. *Determine current performance levels.* Once the team has gathered the necessary data and compared it with current performance levels, the results are analyzed. Generally, they reveal a negative or positive performance gap. Sometimes they show no significant differences.
5. *Determine future performance levels.* The benchmarking team forecasts the expected improvements by the company under study for use in establishing new goals. This assures that goals will still equal or perhaps exceed the performance of the studied organization following the time it takes to implement the team's findings.
6. *Communicate benchmark findings and gain acceptance.* The team presents its methodology, findings, and proposed strategies to senior management. This information is also communicated to the employees who will be asked to help implement the new strategies.
7. *Establish functional goals.* After concurrence, the team presents final recommendations on ways in which the organization must change, based on the benchmark findings, to reach the new goals.
8. *Develop action plans.* The team develops specific action plans for each objective that provide for behavioral considerations in implementing change with strategies for obtaining full organizational support.
9. *Implement specific actions and monitor progress.* The plans are put into place. Data on the new level of performance are collected. Adjustments to the process are made if the goals are not being met, and problem-solving teams may be formed to investigate.
10. *Recalibrate benchmarks.* Over time, the benchmarks are re-evaluated and updated to ensure that they are based on the latest performance data.

The Twelve Points Of Managing A Church

Note: The following has been adapted from W. Edwards Deming by Norman Shawchuck and Gustave Rath in *Benchmarks of Quality in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994). Deming, often considered the founder of the TQM movement, identified 14 Points for managers and seven deadly sins of management.

- 1. Aim to constantly improve, serve well and grow or survive by choice.*
- 2. Adopt a philosophy that will meet your theological position and your vision.*
- 3. Do not wait for failures. Do things right the first time.*
- 4. Do not be cheap or sloppy. Spend the appropriate money or use the needed resources.*
- 5. Improve constantly and forever. You can always have a better church.*
- 6. Develop and use training programs for both clergy and laity.*
- 7. Develop, use and respect professional and lay leadership.*
- 8. Drive out fear of participation. Drive out distrust. Develop enthusiasm.*
- 9. Break down barriers between clergy and staff, paid and volunteer, clergy and laity, as well as all other groups*
- 10. Everyone is responsible for quality.*
- 11. Encourage education and self-improvement for all. Clergy and laity should go beyond the training and development offered by the seminaries and denominations.*
- 12. Transforming the church is everyone's job.*

One Disease Of Managing A Church

- 1. Having a lack of constancy of purpose.*

The Twelve Points Of Managing A Church

NOTE: The following has been adapted from W. Edwards Deming by Dr. Norman Blackwood and
Thomas Kelly in *Leadership in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Alpha Press, 1994).
During 1990, I visited the founder of the TQM movement, identified 12 Points for
managers, and revised them to suit of management.

1. Aim to continuously improve, serve well and grow or survive by choice.
2. Adopt a philosophy that will meet your theological position and your vision.
3. Do not waste for failure. Do things right the first time.
4. Do not be cheap or sloppy. Spend the appropriate money to use the needed resources.
5. Improve constantly and forever. You can always have a better church.
6. Develop and use training programs for both clergy and lay.
7. Develop new and respect professionals and lay leadership.
8. Drive out fear of participation. Do not distrust. Develop confidence.
9. Break down barriers between clergy and staff, past and present, clergy and staff, do well as all other groups.
10. Everyone is responsible for quality.
11. Encourage a mission and self-improvement for all. Clergy and lay should go beyond the training and development offered by the seminary and denominations.
12. Transferring the church is everyone's job.

Use These 12 Points Of Managing A Church

1. Having a lack of consistency of purpose

PURPOSE, VISION AND MISSION

by Rev. Arlene J. Ackerman

*"Without vision the people will perish.." Proverbs 29:18
".. be of one mind united in thought and purpose." I Cor. 1:10*

I am reminded of a pilot of an airplane who announced to his passengers," Ladies and gentlemen, I have good news and bad news. On the bad side, our instruments have gone out and we don't know where we're going. The good news is that we've picked up a tail wind and are making very good time." Hopefully, this is not a description of your ministry.

Excellence in ministry is only possible when built upon the strong foundation of clearly articulated, understood and communicated beliefs and values expressed in a vital faith which lives out those beliefs and values. It becomes most likely when a congregation embraces a God-given vision of how things might be, and establishes a mission to see the vision become a reality. However, if you ask typical church members why their church exists you'll get a wide variety of answers. Most church members and pastors do not have a clear consensus on these issues. They simply have never seriously, let alone strategically, considered the question.

Rarely does someone buy a ticket and board a train without knowing where it is going! And, yet many churches today do not have a clearly defined destination (vision) or an articulated plan (mission) on how they will get there. This leaves church leaders then wondering why people aren't swarming to get on board! Once on board passengers trust the tracks (values and beliefs) are in good order and connected to the destination. If the tracks are not well cared for, or if it appears the train is headed for an obscure destination or no destination at all, then people will be jumping off at every stop along the way.

Rick Warren author of the Purpose Driven Church writes, "There is incredible power in having a clearly defined purpose (vision). If it is short enough for everyone to remember, your statement will yield five wonderful benefits for your church."

- 1. A clear purpose (vision) builds morale** - Paul reminds us in I Cor. 1:10 that the key to harmony in the church is to be united in purpose. If your vision is unclear, your morale will be low.
- 2. A clear purpose (vision) reduces frustration** - Isaiah 26:3 says that God "gives perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm and put their trust in God." A clear purpose not only defines what we do, it defines what we do not do.
- 3. A clear purpose (vision) allows concentration** - A focused light has tremendous power. Diffused light has no power at all. It allows us to keep the main thing the main thing.
- 4 A clear purpose (vision) attracts cooperation** - People want to join a church that knows where it's going.

5. A clear purpose (vision) assists evaluation - II Cor. 13:5 says, "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith, test yourselves." How does a church evaluate itself? A clear purpose gives you the tool to evaluate how you are doing.

Warren also reminds us that, "Absolutely nothing will revitalize a discouraged church faster than rediscovering it's purpose."

Definitions:

Values Statement: The most cherished beliefs and principles that guide a church. William Easum states, "Value statements set the boundaries of opportunity in which individuals and groups within the congregation are free to live out the mission and vision statements without having to get permission to act. They provide the subtle boundaries that informally sanction or prohibit behavior without the church having to vote."

Vision (purpose) Statement: A picture of the desired future of this church, inspiring loyalty & commitment. Usually a one sentence statement. It needs to be clear, short, specific and written. (Disneyland's purpose is: "To provide people happiness.") In the attached article, Unlocking the Power of a Mission (vision) Statement you will see an example of how it can be effectively used.

Mission Statement: "A description of this church in terms of its services and products, its clients and customers, and its roles and functions." (National Center for Nonprofit Boards) Measurable goals can then be established on how to attain the Mission. The mission statement establishes boundaries and set limits and ensures the focus of limited resources.

Depending on the school of thought sometimes the definitions for Vision and Mission are reversed.

Elements of a Mission Statement (National Center for Nonprofit Boards and Support Centers of America): Name of Organization (who), provides (what), to (for whom), through/by (how) so that (why - vision statement)

Vision statements must inspire people and communicate what direction you are going. It must be short enough that people can remember it and big enough to draw people to it.

Mission statements must be specific enough to give direction and measurable enough to let you evaluate whether or not you're making progress and if not, help you to make course corrections.

What is the unique VISION and MISSION that God has given to your church?

Where do you start?

Consider the biblical mandates for the church: The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) Prayerfully, explore these and other scriptures. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Why does the church exist?
2. What kind of church is God calling you to be?
3. What are we to do as a church? (What does God want us to do in the world?)
4. How are we to do it?

Whose Vision is it?

There are any number of ways to initially write Vision and Mission statements. Whatever system is used it must find ownership in the hearts of the pastor and lay leadership if it is to have meaning. (Read the enclosed article, "Clarifying Our Mission, Vision, and Values" for one example.)

In his book, Turn Around Churches, George Barna writes: "The pastor need not be the person who creates every element within the plan but must be the driving force behind the plan. The plan must be aggressively championed by the pastor and key leaders."

Whether initiated by the pastor through prayer and fasting or working with the lay leadership or done as a congregational process the vision and mission statements must go through a process of being refined by the leadership and membership of the church. If this is solely a "top down process" there will be little ownership with few positive results.

If the Vision, Mission and Values are to have meaning they must be used and used in meaningful ways! They must be central to the entire decision making process of the church. It is through the lens of these statements that we find focus to ministry, budgeting, worship style, educational offerings, creation of new ministries, permission giving, staffing and use of resources. Without these statements only a few individual members are empowered, with them in place everyone knows the critical focus of the church and has the information that empowers them to be part of the team. "The intention is for these statements to become the actual leadership of the church," writes William Easum, church consultant.

The Nehemiah Principle - "Vision and Purpose must be restated every 26 days in order for it to stay alive in the minds of the people." John Maxwell

Diagnostic Questions :

1. Is there a publicly held and understood set of beliefs and values? Are they written? Who has copies?
2. How many sermons, workshops, retreats, courses, classes or other opportunities are available to teach or deepen those beliefs?
3. When and how are new and potential members taught those beliefs and values?
4. Does the congregation have a vision for its future? Does the congregation know where it wants to be ten years from now? How will your community be different because the church is there?
5. Is there a vision statement for the church? Is the vision statement in written form? When and how is it used?
6. Do the leaders invite and support expressions of the vision from all persons and areas of ministry? Does the Pastor preach and teach about vision? How often? Are there classes to teach about vision and prayerful listening for God's leading?

7. Does the congregation have a mission statement based on its vision, beliefs and values? Is the mission statement in written form? Where is the mission statement available?
8. Has the congregation created or reviewed the mission statement within the past two to four years? Did the entire congregation have opportunity for participation in the creation or review of the mission statement?
9. Are members knowledgeable of the mission statement? Does the Pastor teach and preach about the mission of the church? Are there classes to teach about the meaning of and opportunities for achieving the mission of the church?
10. Is the mission statement used as a gauge to test the congregation's decisions and activities? In which decision-making situations are the vision and mission statements used? What happens when there are interests competing with the vision and mission statement?
11. How does the vision and mission statement influence the budgeting process?

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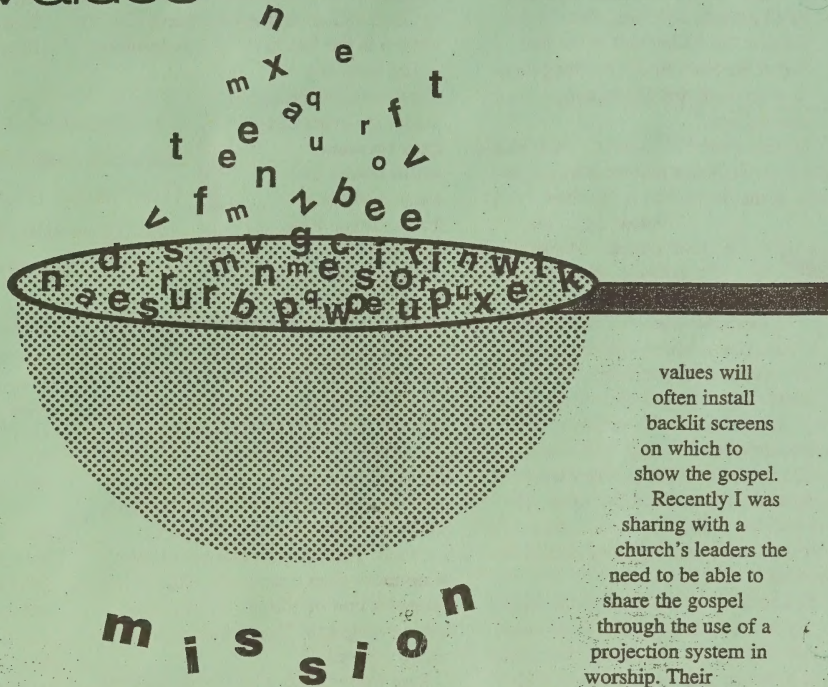
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Clarifying Our Mission, Vision, and Values

by William M. Easum



One of the critical issues before most churches is the clarification of what God can do through them in these changing times. Several religious books focus on the importance of clarifying mission or purpose. Many secular books focus on the importance of managing by values. Two years ago I wrote about the importance of mission, vision, and values in *Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers*. Once before in *Net Results* [September 1996] I wrote about the importance of core values and purpose. This year my friend Tom Bandy and I wrote about mission, vision, values, and beliefs in our book *Growing Spiritual Redwoods* (scheduled for release this fall).

Why this sudden interest in clarifying the purpose of the church? Because we live in a time of revolutionary and complex change . . . a time in which everything around the world is moving from one world view to another. In such a time it is easy for an organization to lose its direction and focus on its own survival instead of extending its mission into a new era.

Stained-glass windows are a good example of the need to clarify our mission once again. Originally, these windows were one way churches told the gospel story to

people who could not read. They were the "moving pictures" about the gospel.

In the beginning, stained-glass

windows were a vehicle for sharing the message of the church. Today, many long-term Christians see them as essential elements of a church building—not as vehicles for the gospel. Congregations actually split over whether or not to keep or to add stained-glass windows. Churches changing location often fight over whether or not to take the windows with them.

Many churches have confused stained-glass windows with their mission, vision, and values. Otherwise they would use movie clips in worship today to tell the story to visual people who do not thrive on reading. Just as stained-glass windows were often positioned so that light

could come through them to better depict the story, so today's churches that are clear about their mission, vision, and

values will often install backlit screens on which to show the gospel.

Recently I was sharing with a church's leaders the need to be able to share the gospel through the use of a projection system in worship. Their

response was "It costs too much," to which I replied, "It is not nearly as expensive as re-leathering your pipe organ." After a long silence, one man spoke up, "But that's different. A church has to have an organ; it doesn't have to have a projection system."

Could it be that a projection system is today's equivalent of the past's pipe organs or stained-glass windows?

Jesus spent most of his life clarifying his mission, vision, and values, and he made them very clear to his first disciples. In Luke 4:18 (RSV) he declared his mission.

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

He explained in his vision how he would carry out that mission. In Acts 1:8 (RSV) and Matthew 28:19 (RSV) he said,

The intention is for these statements to become the actual leadership of the church.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

He also shared the *values*, which would guide his decisions and measure his success, in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-11.

"Blessed are . . . the poor in spirit . . . those who mourn . . . the meek . . . those who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . . the merciful . . . the pure in heart . . . the peacemakers . . . those who are persecuted . . ."

More than once and in a variety of ways, Jesus shared with us his mission, vision, and values. These "statements" guided his every decision. They were his compass in the good and bad times. He was a clearly defined spiritual leader on a mission. Church leaders today should be the same.

So how does a church go about establishing mission, vision, and values statements? My experience has taught me that there is no one way to accomplish such clarity of direction, but some guidelines seem to work best most of the time. Consider the following steps for developing mission, vision, and values statements.

Step One: In an existing church, secure the official body's approval to set up a Steering Team (limit to fewer than eleven key people if possible) to take the church through a process of formulating mission, vision, and values statements to guide the decision making of the church. This is the most difficult step, because any "boss" or "bosses" (every church has one or two) must be willing to give up that control. In a new church plant, the planting team develops the mission, vision, and values statements before planting the church. This is an easy step in a new church plant.

Step Two: The pastor, the Steering Team members, and all staff persons spend the time necessary to write their own individual statements without any coordination or comparison. This step

eliminates the question of who should begin the process of drafting a mission statement, and it levels the playing field.

Step Three: When each person feels comfortable with what he or she has written, everyone comes together to share, explain, and compare statements. Collaboration is the key here, not compromise.

The tendency at this stage is wanting to include everything from everyone, which results in a mission statement that is far too long. Such statements never give leadership to an organization.

Usually, they are put away, never to be referred to again. Keep in mind that everything is not equally important. In this step of the process you are trying to arrive at only the essentials for this one church.

Include in the statements only those things that the group considers to be of such importance that the church would not be the church if they weren't included. The mission statement should be no more than a sentence. The vision statement can be longer, but no more than a paragraph. The values statement can be a page.

Step Four: With a larger circle of the leaders, conduct focus groups in which to share the existing draft and encourage feedback. The goal here is to share, explain, and listen. Stress that the statements are just drafts in the formative stage. Now is the time for the leaders to say how they feel about the statements and to give constructive feedback.

Step Five: The Steering Team synthesizes all of the feedback into the final document. By this time every word in the statements should carry powerful meaning and imagery.

Caution: Do not try to clone someone else's statements. Doing so usually results in statements that really do not reflect the essence of what God wants to do through this church. For that reason, I have intentionally avoided sharing any actual statements in this article.

Step Six: Hold a congregational meeting to communicate the mission, vision, and values statements. The purpose of this meeting is to secure formal

approval of the statements (in a permission-giving church this might be one of the few votes the congregation ever takes). Review the process through which the church has gone. Show the results of the labor. Then give some examples of how these statements might affect the way the church functions in the future. If it is

clear at this point that the statements require the church to make some changes, explain these and how and when the changes will be made.

By now it should become clear to everyone that the intention is for these statements to

become the actual leadership of the church, instead of the board, council, deacons, session, or whatever. This is a huge shift that everyone must understand. Every decision will be measured by these statements: "If we do this, will it carry out the essence of these statements?"

The clearer everyone is at this point, the easier the transition into a permission-giving, values-directed church. The question of who decides is greatly reduced. The statements decide, and anyone is free to interpret them and act upon them. (Of course, common sense, laced with faith, must abound.) When someone does something that the majority of the people feel violates the spirit of the statements, that person is held accountable by whatever group the congregation sets aside to do this.

Please turn to page 18

This report on the forces transforming ministry in the 21st century appears monthly in *Net Results*. For more information, contact Bill Easum at 1126 Whispering Sands Port Aransas, Texas 78373 Voice Mail: 512/749-5364 Fax: 512/749-5800 E-mail: Easum@aol.com Home page: www.Easum.com

21st Century Strategies Inc.

Clarifying Our Mission, Vision, and Values

Continued from page 15

By now you may be more than a year into the process of arriving at these statements. Don't let the amount of time deter you from starting the process. If you take the time now, you will drastically reduce the time it takes in the future to accomplish ministry. Remember that Jesus spent the first thirty years of his ministry developing his mission, vision, and values.

Step Seven: Use the statements to guide the decision making of the church. Give everyone in the church a tastefully prepared copy of the statements, and encourage their display somewhere in everyone's home and office as reminders of the mission, vision, and values of the church. Also, post them in prominent places throughout the church, where everyone passes by them at regular intervals.

Step Eight: You may want to develop simple guidelines for taking action on the statements. For example, you may want to say that people can start a new ministry without asking permission as long as (1) the new ministry enhances the mission, vision, and values of the church; (2) they can find two or three other people who want to accomplish the same ministry; and (3) funding exists for the ministry or they can find the funding. This allows the mission, vision, and values—not any one person or group—to become the leaders of the church.

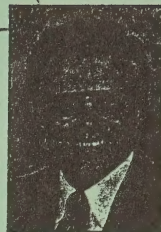
One more important point: Leaders must change before the church will change. Very few church leaders, pastors included, are prepared to do ministry in the emerging world. Most of our home

churches and our seminaries did not prepare us for what we face today. So most pastors and church leaders must undergo radical change if they want to see God work through them. Here is where the change begins: **Pastors and key leaders must allow God to set their agenda—not the church members.**

What would happen in your church if the real leaders of the church were your mission, vision, and values statements? Would it cut down the amount of time people spend in meetings? Would more ministry be accomplished? Would more people blossom in their faith? Think about it. Maybe it's time to decide what God wants the people in your church to be and do.



Unlocking the Power of a Mission Statement



by Rudy Heintzelman

The corporate world has helped churches by encouraging them to develop mission statements.

Unfortunately, however, many congregations that develop mission statements discover that they make little or no impact on how decisions are made and what ministries are developed. Why is this? Often, a large group of individuals, each of whom has an agenda, develops the mission statement. It thus becomes massive, pointing in every direction at once.

To counterbalance that design flaw, our church leaders developed a brief, measurable statement that influences each congregational decision. We print the words "Win, Disciple, Serve" in bold print on every weekly worship bulletin. Those words continually remind us of who we are, what we value, and where we are headed. Whenever we consider doing something, we ask three questions: Will it Win? Will it Disciple? Will it Serve? If it doesn't, we don't do it. The core essential of who we are as a faith community is wrapped up in those three words—"Win, Disciple, Serve."

To encourage our members to volunteer, we give each one a commitment card each year that lists more than 190 areas of service opportunities. The last opportunity on the list is "other."

What if someone wishes to volunteer and believes that God is leading him or her into something our church presently isn't doing? Our

"dipstick" for evaluating whether to establish that new ministry comes back to "Win, Disciple, Serve."

We also use our mission statement as a tool to facilitate the invention of new ministries throughout the year. Those ministries

come from the grassroots (laity with ideas and passions)—not top down (staff and

committees). When someone volunteers to do something new that meets the test of our mission statement, that ministry is preapproved. No committee reviews are necessary, because our mission statement is the engine that drives the train. If the new idea meets the "Win, Disciple, Serve" criteria (since we have predetermined that this is the direction of the church), we turn our laity loose to do that ministry without passing it through a committee and/or a board.

Someone, of course, must serve as the evaluation-process gatekeeper. Since I am minister of programs here at Frazer, the church has given me that responsibility. However, a congregation could assign the gatekeeper role to someone else in the church, including a layperson.

If the proposed ministry is questionable at the point of conforming to your congregation's mission statement, you may want

to give a group of individuals the authority to study, evaluate, and decide whether to launch it. That group must be willing to say "no" if the idea does not fit with the mission statement. Otherwise

you can end up doing a lot of good things and neglecting what God has called your church to be.

This means that the folks doing the evaluation must be honest and communicate with the person who developed an idea as to why that ministry will not be done in your faith community. (Probably the most unusual

thing someone volunteered to do at Frazer that didn't pass the "Win, Disciple, Serve" criteria statement was to turn our sanctuary into a bird sanctuary. We didn't see how this would accomplish our purposes.)

On the other hand, when a layperson with an idea gets the "go for it" (the vast majority of ideas are in this category), amazing things take place in that person's life. A sense of value, a feeling of appreciation, and an

attitude of encouragement help the person in his or her faith journey. He or she is also highly motivated to do the ministry.

This procedure also allows for quick evaluation and implementation. An example of a new ministry that developed was our PAWS (Pets Are Working Saints) ministry. One woman wanted to use animals to reach out to families with special-needs children. Because it met our mission statement criterion of "winning," more than eighty people became involved within two weeks of the time she shared her idea with us. There were no committee meetings and no board meetings. There was no waiting months or years for the go-ahead. There was no disgruntled or discouraged layperson thinking no one really cared about the direction in which she felt God leading her. Rather, a highly motivated woman was turned loose to the ministry that God called her to do.

Your mission statement contains a tremendous, hidden power, waiting to be unleashed to carry your church's ministry forward. A mission statement is too valuable to merely hang on a wall or file with the board minutes. Use it to carry your church forward to minister to a hurting, needy world. 

When someone volunteers to do something new that meets the test of our mission statement, that ministry is preapproved.

Our church leaders developed a brief, measurable statement that influences each congregational decision.

Resources for Purpose/Vision/Mission

compiled by Rev. Don Eastman & Rev. Arlene Ackerman: July 12, 1997

Highly Recommended:

Callahan, Kennon L., *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1983). See also, Callahan's companion book, *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church: The Leaders Guide* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1987). This is an excellent tool for long-range planning in the local church. Callahan is a highly regarded expert on church development and management.

Callahan, Kennon L., *Building for Effective Mission* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995). This more recent book by Callahan guides church leaders through a process of clarifying and prioritizing their mission.

Kallestad, Walt, and Schey, Steve, *Total Quality Ministry* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994). Co-authored by the senior pastor and chief operating officer of a rapidly growing Lutheran megachurch in Phoenix, this book presents a superb adaptation of the principles of total quality management (TQM) in the church setting.

Shawchuck, Norman, and Rath, Gustave, *Benchmarks of Quality in the Church*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press: 1994). Extremely helpful for churches seeking to achieve excellence in ministry, this book also integrates principles of total quality management into the local church setting.

Warren, Rick, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995). Written by the Senior Pastor of one of today's most remarkable churches, this book shifts the focus away from building church programs to emphasizing a people-building process. Saddleback Valley Community Church was planted by Warren in 1980 in Orange County, California. Its very clear sense of purpose has resulted in a congregation of more than 10,000 by 1996.

Other useful resources:

Bowles, Jerry and Hammond, Joshua, *Beyond Quality* (New York: Berkley Books, 1991). This book gives a good overview of the impact of total quality management on American businesses, and presents a wealth of information that can inform development of quality ministry in churches. The best place to find this book is in the business section of a large bookstore.

Bryson, John M., *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995). Written by a professor of planning and public affairs at the University of Minnesota, this book is extremely valuable for strategic planning in nonprofit organizations including churches. It provides the process now in use for strategic planning through the UFMCC's Strategic Growth Initiative.

Shawchuck, Norman, and Heuser, Roger, *Leading the Congregation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993. Written by a United Methodist consultant to churches and an Assemblies of God professor of church leadership, this book provides excellent foundational information for church leaders about to begin a planning process.

Benchmarks of Excellence Celebrative Worship

developed by Rev. Michael Piazza with additions by Rev. Nori J. Rost

Introduction

To say that effective worship is the most important factor in the health of a church is somewhat like saying that air is more important than food or water. Certainly, there are other components that must be in place for a congregation to function as God intended. Yet, to continue this analogy, just as your body can survive, and for a time, even thrive with a less than ideal diet, it seems that a church with excellent worship can often compensate for other weaknesses. On the other hand, a congregation that does worship poorly seldom has the resources or opportunities to excel in other areas. Simply put, churches suffocate without strong worship.

Application

Few pastors or lay leaders would disagree that worship is of vital importance. The break-down seems to occur in two places.

1. First, few "insiders" are able to recognize and admit that their worship is not meaningful. It obviously has meaning to those who attend, and so we assume that it would be meaningful to others if they would only give us a try. The truth is that almost every Metropolitan Community Church averages at least one or two visitors per week. That is 52-104 visitors a year. If just half of those found our services meaningful enough to return, many churches could double their attendance in just one year. By using only insiders as the judge for what is meaningful and relevant we exclude those whose needs our services do not meet. Although we can never design a service to meet everyone's needs, a healthy church understands their calling to be to serve more than just themselves.
2. The other issue seems to be that, given our unique ministry in UFMCC, we have few criterion by which to evaluate our church's health. Within our denomination we have strong and growing churches whose worship style is radically diverse. For example, in arguably the most liberal city in the United States, the worship service that is the largest in that District is evangelical in flavor. On the other hand, in heart of the Bible-belt where evangelicals reign supreme, the service with the largest attendance in the denomination is very liturgical. So, by what standards do we evaluate worship services in UFMCC?

Guiding Principles

The first guiding principle of benchmarks of excellence for celebrative worship in the local church is that *the corporate act of worship is arguably the most profound contact individuals will have with the local church*. Although different ministries and programs can have a powerful impact on people's lives, it is in the worship service where the local church will be judged most keenly.

The second guiding principle is that *clearly the strength of our denomination is our diversity. The purpose of these benchmarks of excellence is not to standardize worship or to encourage conformity to any single style. . Health in worship does not imply that one style is better than another*. It does, however, indicate that there are some basic principles that can help us diagnose the health of our worship regardless of the style.

The third guiding principle is that *Christ calls us as the Church toward wholeness—wholeness and growth in our individual lives and as the Body of Christ. The healthier the local church, the healthier the people it will attract and retain.* These benchmarks are offered to give us a point of reference for moving our services of worship toward excellence and our churches toward health and growth.

Benchmarks

Celebrative

In the Christian tradition, every Sunday, even in Lent is a commemoration of the resurrection which occurred on the first day of the week. Each service should therefore be a celebration of life. Although there are times when the celebration is more serious, quiet, or subdued, worship should always be an occasion for joy. The joy and energy that comes from a relationship with God should find expression when the community gathers for worship.

Questions

What about my local church worship service reflects a joyful relationship with God? What part of the liturgy can be changed to make the service more joyful? How do things such as Processional Hymn, Responsive Call to Worship, Invocational Prayer, Consecration of Communion, Benediction evoke an atmosphere of joy?

Emotional

Laughter and tears should always be appropriate responses to various aspects of worship. That is not to say that people are emotionally manipulated, but rather, worship is not an intellectual activity. People should feel as though they have worshiped. A worship experience that teaches, but does not inspire, comfort, confront, startle, enliven, and soothe has failed to connect the people with the Living God.

Questions

Are people given permission to express emotion corporately? Are the welcome and announcements done in such a way as to evoke an emotional response or in robotic rhythm? Where in the service is this done really well? If I were a first time visitor would I think the congregation of my local church was lively and engaging, or simply unmoving pew potatoes?

Therapeutic

Worship is often the only time throughout the week when some people are offered grace. Within the service people ought to be provided opportunities to unburden themselves of guilt, avail themselves of grace, and consecrate themselves to goodness. Everyone should be able to leave our worship more hopeful and optimistic about themselves and the future. Worship should connect people to the God of health and healing in a way that they believe it is what God's love desires for them, and that they are able to begin that process toward full redemption.

Questions

What opportunities for grace exist in our worship service? How much emphasis is placed on the confession/absolution during Communion? Does the sermon encourage, exhort, challenge through grace or guilt? What ways can we make grace more accessible to the congregation?

Relevant

Every aspect of the service should be appropriate to the congregation that is present. There are some excellent hymns written 200 years ago, and some awful ones written in the 60's. Sermon illustrations that might work well in a predominantly baby boomer congregation may not work well with younger adults. Canned illustrations from heterosexual traditional church sources rarely fly. Care should be given that each aspect of the service communicates to those who are present. The congregation should never be made to feel that they have to enter a time warp to be able to worship. The services should be appropriate to the culture in which the church is located as well.

Questions

How relevant is our worship service? Do the songs chosen fit the cultural milieu of the congregation? Does the liturgy resonate within the hearts of those present? Do the sermon illustrations make people say *a-ha* or *ho-hum* or worse, *what does that have to do with my life*? Do we celebrate special days important to the culture of the church (i.e. Cinco de Mayo, Juneteenth, Coming Out Day)? Do people identify with the message of the church or does the message alienate them?

Excellence

Everything that is done should be done well. "Just say no," applies to people who want to sing, or read, or preach, or pray, but are not gifted to do so publicly. Although we want to be kind and encourage everyone to participate, we have an obligation to others who need this worship service to be helpful and healing to them. Conversely, poorly mimeographed bulletins (or bulletins with lots of typos in them) or ushers who don't know answers to common questions give a poor first impression that may be difficult to overcome. Everything else that happens in the service is experienced through the lens of that first impression. When worship is poorly done the message is transmitted to all present that this is not as important as many other things that they might see or hear which must meet very high standards. If worship is the most important thing we do each week it deserves nothing less than the best. And if we exhort people to "not forsake the gathering together" we dishonor them and their commitment when we are ill-prepared and sloppy in the worship service.

Questions

If I were a first time visitor how would I rate the overall quality of the worship service? Are the ushers well trained and timely? Do the bulletins look as if some care has been taken in preparing them? Do the lectors sound confident and rehearsed or do they stumble over words and mumble? Is the special music inspiring in its delivery as well as its message or is it painful to hear? What one thing could our church do right now that would increase the quality of our worship service.

Participatory

Worship is not performance. The congregation is not the audience. Although everyone probably agrees with that, effective worship makes a special effort to involve the full congregation in a variety of ways. Singing hymns, choruses, responses, unison readings, and responsive readings are the most common ways of getting people involved. There are innumerable more creative ways that require a bit more effort and preparation. Although it is vital to get people involved, it is also important to do so in such a way that those who are not comfortable fully participating may choose not to without being embarrassed or feeling manipulated.

Questions

How do we encourage people to participate in worship? Do we sing praise choruses, encourage people to worship God physically (i.e. lifting hands, clapping in rhythm with the music)? Do we have unison or responsive readings? Is there at least one thing in each worship service which invites participation? What one thing can we do right now to increase participation in an authentic way?

Changing

It is important to vary worship to reflect the changing needs of the community and changing seasons of the church. This is one place where change for the sake of change can be valuable. Although change needs to be well planned and carefully considered, changing the services according to the season allows the congregation to "hear again" parts of worship that might have become rote and routine. On the other hand, doing something different every Sunday never allows for continuity and the stability that our community seems to be longing for. The key is balance.

Questions

Have we had the same order of worship for so long that regular attendees don't even need a bulletin? When was the last time we changed the way we do something in worship (i.e. Reciting the Creed instead of the Lord's Prayer, changing doxology or Gloria, instituting a Call to Worship, changing Communion liturgy)? Does our order of worship reflect the changing seasons? Are there "sacred cows" we've been afraid to let go of? Does our liturgy sound robotic or fresh and new?

Flow

Each service should have movement, flow, and rhythm. There should be energetic parts and quiet parts. There should be times to laugh and times to sit in silent contemplation. There should be times to speak and times to listen. These various parts should have integrity in their relationship to one another and not engender a sense of dissonance within the service. Often it is difficult for the leader to discern the rhythm of a service in progress. Listening to it afterwards, or better yet watching it on video can help in not repeating mistakes. Watching a service with objective observers is best.

Questions

Do the different parts of the service seem to flow into one another or is it choppy and disjointed? Is there an internal rhythm to the worship service that makes people feel comfortable and serene or does it leave them feeling irritable and off balance? Is there balance in the different aspects?

User Friendly

From access to the building to the bulletin every component of the service should be carefully evaluated through the eyes of a first time visitor who knows nothing about church. This critical viewing will insure that the service is accessible to the maximum number of people. It is unfortunate to give attention in inclusive language, but miss how much of what we do is excluding to those who don't know our secret words, tunes, and rituals. Actions like identifying first time visitors should keep in mind that the number one fear for most people is to be asked to speak in public. Making people feel safe, welcome, and comfortable should be one of our highest goals.

Questions

Do we have a visible place where visitors can get information about our church such as a Visitor's Table? Do we have the words to every thing we say or sing (including standards such as the doxology or Lord's Prayer)? When possible do we have the music to songs as well (most important if tune is difficult or unfamiliar)? Does the pastor/presider explain elements of the worship service such as where the liturgy is and give enough time for people to locate it before beginning (i.e. "Please join me in singing the doxology which is printed in your worship bulletin")? Are restrooms well-marked? Do we embarrass or embrace our new visitors?

Timely

Those we seek to reach live busy lives. Time is more valuable than money. In addition, television and radio has trained them to be very impatient with delays and empty spaces. Services should start and end at the appointed time. No one is edified watching a reader or soloist walk to a microphone. Gaps in the continuity of the service communicates to modern worshipers that what we are doing is not as valuable or as important as what they see on television. Again, listening to an audio tape of a service may reveal more unproductive times of silence than we imagine. Although this may not reflect our society's best values, it is a reality we can adapt to or be penalized by.

Questions

Are there lengthy pauses while we wait for a lector to arrive or the pianist to find his place in the hymnal? Do we have a system whereby the next part of the service is in place and ready to go before the end of the current part (i.e. lector knows to come forward during first hymn and stand at the podium so that once song is over, scripture reading can begin)? Do the Communion Servers pray brief prayers of blessing or lengthy prayers and how does that impact those who are simply seated either waiting for communion or after receiving it?

Good Preaching

Although each pastor has differing talent, it is not unreasonable that congregations expect a certain level of ministry from anyone who would presume to preach the gospel. Every preacher can be well prepared, organized, and relevant. There are unlimited resources available, and beyond that, preachers should model the need we all have to ask for assistance and feed-back. In formal and informal ways those who preach should create a safe way in which s/he can receive authentic and honest input. When subjects don't agree with verbs, statements aren't supported by facts, and healthy theology is not expressed, we exclude from the congregation those who take the gospel seriously with their minds as well as their hearts.

Questions

How much time does the preacher take in preparing the sermon? What type of research does the preacher do (i.e. Bible dictionaries, commentaries, illustration searches)? What type of education does the preacher do on a continual basis to keep fresh in preaching? Do the sermons seem relevant and well thought out or hastily slapped together?

Conducive Environment

Space is a struggle for many congregations in UFMCC. However, whether we are renting or buying we must work to ensure that the space is accessible, clean, odor free, and conducive to congregational worship. There are a variety of inexpensive and creative ways we can enhance any room. How we maintain, decorate, light, and utilize a space speaks very loudly to visitors about our theology, self-esteem, and how serious we are about being the church of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, after we have been in a building a short while it becomes difficult to be objective. Asking visitors about their impressions can be quite insightful. Beyond the obvious it is important to ascertain the effectiveness of lighting, sound signage, and parking.

Questions

If I were a first time visitor, what would strike me about our building/worship space? Is it easy to find? Are the bathrooms clean and stocked with necessary supplies? Is the Sanctuary well-kept or does it need painting or a major cleaning? What one thing can we do today to make our environment more conducive to worship?

Inclusive Worship Celebration Planning Resources

David W. McCollough - Director of Celebration
Cathedral of Hope, Dallas - Texas

These resources all contain "calls to worship, calls to confession, prayers of confession, collects, affirmations, litanies, benedictions, offertory prayers" etc. which compliment the readings for each Sunday of the Church Year.

Lavon Bayler - Worship Planning Resources - This wonderful woman works in the United Church of Christ. She is quite the prolific worship writer. Here is a list of her books. They are all worth having in your library. Pilgrim Press - She has great indexes and also writes a hymn text to go with each Sunday of the year to a familiar hymn tune.

Fresh Winds of the Spirit - Year A - Book I

Fresh Winds of the Spirit - Year A - Book II

Whispers of God - Year B - Book I

Led By Love - Year B - Book II

Refreshing Rains of the Living Word - Year C - Book I

Gathered By Love - Year C - Book II

Worship Resources for Christian Congregations - *A Symphony for the Senses* - by C. Welton Gaddy and Don W. Nixon - Smyth & Helwys Publishing - Macon, Georgia. Any church who takes worship seriously needs this wonderful resource at their finger tips. It is filled with marvelous materials for celebrating the entire church year.

Be Thou Present - *Prayers, Litanies, and Hymns for Christian Worship* - Peggy A. Haymes - Smyth & Helwys Publishing - Macon, Georgia. Ms. Haymes has a real gift at writing liturgical resources. This book is full of materials one could use year round. Keep it close by, after you buy it!

Equal Rites - *Lesbian and Gay Worship, Ceremonies, and Celebrations* - Kittredge Cherry & Zalmon Sherwood - Westminster John Knox Press - Louisville, KY - This resource came right from the UFMCC Headquarters - It's a great resource written by MCC folks. It worked in their churches, so it might work for you. A variety of meaningful worship resources.

Prayers for One Voice - Years A,B, & C all in one book - Everett Tilson & Phyllis Cole - Abingdon Press. These prayers are several paragraphs and with a little thought can be made into calls to worship, calls to confession, prayers of confession, etc. Truly wonderful writings for any worship celebration.

Flames of the Spirit - Ruth C. Duck - Pilgrim Press

Touch Holiness - Ruth C. Duck & Maren C. Tirabassi - Pilgrim Press

Everflowing Streams - Ruth C. Duck & Michael G. Bausch (Old hymns now inclusified) The three books listed above have Ruth C. Duck in common and that's enough reason to purchase them! You'll find information in them for lectionary worship celebrations as well as for celebrations during the year dealing with different themes.

When We Gather - Years A,B, & C - James G. Kirk - Geneva Press - This is a three book series (one for each year). Great litanies and affirmations of faith. He uses a theme paragraph for each Sunday and also includes a wonderful prayer of thanksgiving. Good material to have on hand!

An Inclusive Language Lectionary - Prepared by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. - Westminster Press - One for each Year A,B,C. The books contain the scriptures for each Sunday of the year written out so you don't have to look them up everytime you start to plan a service. All scriptures, except the Psalms, have themes written for the passage as well.

Inclusive Language Lectionary - These books are for years A,B, and C, They are published by Priests For Equality at P.O. Box 5243 - West Hyattsville, MD 20782-0243. These books are new for 1996.

Daring to Speak Love's Name - A Gay and Lesbian Prayer Book - Elizabeth Stuart - Hamish Hamilton: London - This is an excellent resource for churches who aren't use to including the lesbian and gay community in their planning but are serious inclusive worship! The chapter titles are: Celebrating Lesbian and Gay Relationships (Holy Union services and the like), A Celebration of Coming Out, Partings (how do lesbian and gay couples divorce?), Healing Liturgies for People Living with HIV and AIDS, The Death of Friends.

More Than Words - Prayer and Ritual for Inclusive Communities - Janet Schaffran & Pat Kosak - Meyer/Stone Books - This book is a wonderful combination of prayers, songs, and entire worship celebrations that reflect the spirituality of many different peoples and cultures. Each service includes inclusive language, symbols and rituals relevant to the service, images of God to use in the service, and examples of cultural pluralism.

Graphics For Sunday - Susan Daily - Collins Dove (Melbourne, Australia) - These graphics are unbelievable! They go with Years A,B, & C - all in one book! If you are looking for great artwork for your bulletins and other celebrations, this is the book for you! Copyright permission is given as well! To add to your collection she also has a second book, More Graphics For Sundays and Feast Days! You'll be glad you added these books to your worship resources!

Inclusive Language Hymnals

Chalice Hymnal - Disciples of Christ - 1995 - Chalice Press, St. Louis, MO - This hymnal is a major step forward for most MCC's in the area of inclusive language! There are about 20 hymns that blantly uninclusive. There are wonderful worship resources in this book and some fabulous new hymns. Ruth Duck was on their Hymnal Committee! There are still words used such as king in this book.

The New Century Hymnal - United Church of Christ - 1995 - The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, OH - This hymnal in the most inclusive language hymnal in the world! It pushes the issue right off the stage. There are no references to Father without a Mother reference. The Christmas hymns and carols have been inclusified. It is an excellent resource. For MCC's looking for no king or ethnic references, this is the book for you!

Jane Parker Huber - This fabulous hymn writer now has two books of hymns. Each of them are great and need to be in all worship planners libraries.

Singing in Celebration - Westminster Press - This is a book of fabulous hymns which are all inclusive and are set to familiar tunes. The music is included in the book. It's must for most any Sunday of the year. It has great indexes, too!

A Singing Faith - Westminster Press - This one is currently out of print. If you see it anywhere, get it!

For the Living of These Days - *Resources for Enriching Worship* - Smyth & Helwys Publishing - Macon, Georgia. - This supplement is a wealth of hymns, litanies, and prayers for use in many times of celebration in the life of your church and it's very inclusive.

New 1995 Inclusive Language Bibles

The Inclusive Language New Testament - This one is done by a group called Priests For Equality - their address is P.O. Box 5243 - West Hyattsville, MD 20782-0243. That same name PFE is the name of the Publisher.

The New Testament of the Inclusive Language Bible - This is published by Cross Cultural Publications, Inc. - P.O. Box 506 - Notre Dame, IN, 46556 - 219-272-0889 (Phone) or 219-273-5973 (FAX)

The New Testament and Psalms - This is from Oxford University Press, New York.

Worship Planners

The United Methodist Music and Worship Planner - 1995-1996 - This book covers every Sunday of the church year and is published yearly. After you buy the first one they send you notices each year afterward that it's time to get another one! The scriptures for each Sunday are written out, except for the Psalm. Hymn suggestions for the day are given with references to the United Methodist Hymnal (go get one if you don't have it, from Cokesbury, it's another good resource). Solos are suggested for the day as well as anthems. It is very well laid out and easy to use. This may be ordered from Abingdon Press in Nashville, TN.

Sundays & Seasons - This is a Lutheran publication. This resource goes beyond the UMC book by not only dividing the year up in Seasons of the Church Year but by giving you many ideas about how to celebrate each season. There are a great deal of supplemental prayers, calls to worship, baptism services, ideas for communion, ideas for children in worship, etc. The scriptures are not written out for you, but are given, along with hymn suggestions from the Lutheran Book of Worship (yes, this is another good resource if you don't have one) and some other service music. This is also published yearly and can be ordered from Augsburg Fortress in Minneapolis, MN. The item number is 3-1200. 800-328-4648

Other Worship/Music Planning Resources

The Liturgical Press - *Clip Art for the Liturgical Year* - Book and PC Computer Click Art
P. O. Box 7500 - Collegeville, MN 56321-7500 - 800-858-5450

Kempke's Music Service - 25% off all anthems & 10% off orchestrations
800-753-6753

Hope Publishing - FREE quarterly cassette tape with music of new materials
800-323-1049

Beckenhorst Press, Inc. - FREE quarterly cassette tape with music of new materials
614-451-6461 / FAX 614-451-6627

Augsburg Fortress - FREE quarterly cassette tape with music of new materials
800-328-4648

Word Music Choral Club - Quarterly cassette (\$60) or CD (\$80) mailings with the sheet music - 800-933-9673 - a really great resource throughout the year.

PraiseGathering Music Group Choral Club - Quarterly cassette music review with anthems - This is also from Word Music - 800-933-9673, ext. 2037 - (\$50)

Integrity Music, Inc. - These folks have the very best in Praise & Worship Music including many quarterly subscriptions. This is a mailing list and worship resource you must have! 800-239-7000

Worship Leader Magazine - \$14.95 per year (six issues) - This magazine has a wealth of resource materials and advertisements from other companies that always open my eyes to new and exciting products & ideas! - P. O. Box 40985 - Nashville, TN 37204-9902

Christian Copyright Licensing, Inc. (CCLI) ** - 800-234-2446 - There is a fee for this service, but it is worth it. The price is based on the membership of your church. You receive your own license number and it gives you permission to copy texts in bulletins, make overhead projector copies of songsheets, copy choruses for worship, etc. *This does not give you permission to copy anthems for your choir to sing and perform in worship! There is no such creature out there!!!*

**Also available from CCLI is a computer program called *Song Select*. This contains thousands of P&W chorus texts that are cross referenced by topic, theme, etc. You can add your own to the list and do "copy & paste" to your worship bulletins. It's also a great way to keep up new music. \$49.00

BOOKS:

The Worship Phenomenon - Robert E. Webber - Abbot Martyn - Nashville, TN - *Mr. Webber demonstrates through personal experiences, observations, and careful scholarship that it is through worship - the joyful celebration of the work of Christ - that the barriers which separate humanity from God's presence are broken down.*

Worship is a Verb - Robert E. Webber - Abbott Martyn - Nashville, TN - *A modern classic on spiritual renewal. Discusses 8 principles for highly participatory worship. True worship is a joyous celebration of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Worship is not something done to us or for us, but by us.*

Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down - A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture - Marva J. Dawn - William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. - Grand Rapids, MI - *Excellent reading about how to keep the "good" parts of "traditional" worship and doctrine while making worship function effectively in a contemporary "feel-good" society.*

The Gift of Worship - C. Welton Gaddy - Broadman Press - Nashville, TN - *A wonderful book to help all worship leaders "think" again about worship from scratch. Mr. Gaddy's passion is for "meaningful worship" which centers on God, glorifies Christ, involves people, expresses praise, communicates the truth of the Bible, encourages faith, promises redemption, reflects the incarnation, builds up the church, instills vision, makes an offering, nurtures communion, and evokes an "amen."*

February 27, 1997

Benchmarks for Excellence in Ministry

Wholistic Stewardship: Building a Culture of Generosity

developed by Rev. Elder Donald Eastman, July 1, 1997

Introduction

Nothing is more central to the Christian gospel than the act of giving. God so loved the world, that God gave Jesus. The entire New Testament is rich with images of generous giving, sacrificial giving, systematic giving, proportional giving, faithful giving, cheerful giving. Freely giving of ourselves in measures of time, prayer, and God-given gifts of grace, and faithfully giving of our financial resources aligns us with those earliest Christians to whom Paul said, "Whoever sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully....God loves a cheerful giver."

Although often thought preferable to avoid talking about in the church, discussion of money is very central in the teachings of Jesus. Eugene Grimm notes in his book, *Generous People*, "If we were to strike the comments of Jesus about money, we would reduce his teachings by more than one-third. Sixteen of Jesus' approximately thirty-eight parables dealt with money. One of every seven verses in the first three Gospels in some way deals with money. In fact, Jesus spoke about money more than any other subject, except the kingdom of God itself."

Stewardship is not only about money. A wholistic view of stewardship does not limit the focus to financial matters. Gifts, skills and talents of individuals in the church are to be discovered, developed and given in ministry. Faithful stewardship recognizes all that we are and all that we have are gifts entrusted to us by God.

Application

A recent study of financial giving in five U.S. denominations (1996: Dean R. Hoge, et. al) has noted three types of churches:

1. *Tithing* churches have no annual stewardship program, no pledging, no annual appeal telling about budget needs, no other mention of money, aside for appeals for specific missions. An understanding is maintained that members who desire to be in good standing with God and the congregation need to tithe, literally ten percent of their income. Appeals for the general income of the church are limited to preaching that tithing (and giving beyond the tithe) is expected by God and that it wins rewards from God.
2. *Pledging* churches favor tithing, but believe it is unrealistic to expect most members to tithe. The main characteristic of these churches is the annual stewardship program asking for pledges. They usually strive to have all members pledge, and ask members to think in terms of pledging a percentage of household income.
3. *Offering* churches often believe in tithing and pledging but do not stress either. These churches have little teaching about the theology of stewardship and the spiritual meaning of gifts to the church. Efforts to increase giving usually focus on the quality of the program, costs of operating the church and ministry, future vision of the church, and special needs.

Tithing churches tend to have the highest per capita giving and a higher average percentage of annual household income given. Pledging churches tend to do better than offering churches. According to Lyle Schaller, the average weekly per capita giving in mainline churches in 1994 based upon attendance is from \$15-22. In 1996 the UFMCC average was \$14.21.

Within the UFMCC all of these kinds of churches exist. In some cases, a combination of tithing emphasis and an annual pledging program is used. Officially, the UFMCC has embraced tithing as the foundational principle for financial stewardship. "The UFMCC adopts and teaches tithing as the scripturally affirmed means of supporting the Church and its ministries, and as the expression of good stewardship of time, skills, and money by individuals and church bodies. Therefore, it shall be the responsibility of both the clergy and lay leadership of local churches to plan and implement programs of stewardship both to help persons grow in the grace of giving and to fund the Church's ministries." (UFMCC Bylaws, Article X.A.)

Achieving a culture of generosity in a congregation results from an intentional committed effort over a long period of time, not from a simple short-term program effort. In most offering churches there may be significant resistance to pledging programs, an emphasis on tithing, or discussion of money from the pulpit. If stewardship is seen solely in terms of meeting the church's budget and institutional needs, such resistance is understandable. Beginning to effect a change of attitudes is more likely to happen if a positive new context for the discussion is created. Where stewardship is seen in more wholistic terms, it becomes a matter of opportunity for blessing and personal growth.

Biblical *charisma*, a gift of grace, is one of God's most empowering promises to all people in the Body of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, each person in the church is given one or more of these gifts of grace. The rise of the charismatic movement and the results of Vatican II have influenced a dramatic shift in the role of lay ministry during the latter part of the twentieth century. The idea of every member in the church as a minister has increasingly become the norm for vital growing Christian churches around the world. Wholistic stewardship sees the discovery, development and use of one's spiritual gifts as central an act of giving as tithing.

Guiding Principles

The first guiding principle of benchmarks of excellence for stewardship in the local church is that *the Christian ideal of giving is central to the core values and teaching of the church, and will be expressed in a wholistic stewardship emphasis which is both comprehensive and continuous, and which includes the spiritual truths of tithing and generosity as well as an invitation to commitment.*

The second guiding principle of these benchmarks is that *wholistic stewardship includes the discovery, development and effective deployment of the spiritual gifts, talents and skills of every member of the church for the building up of the Body of Christ and fulfillment of God's purpose for the church.*

The third guiding principle is that *wholistic stewardship includes a progression of individual growth reflected in each person's spiritual formation and personal well-being.*

A fourth guiding principle is that *true generosity can only grow from the heart, and a spirit of liberality will never be achieved by legalism which mandates expectations or requires levels of giving.*

Benchmarks

Values

What are the compelling beliefs and principles that determine your church's approach to stewardship? The example of excellence for early Christians was generosity, and the norm was systematic, regular, proportional and sacrificial giving. Tithing, which carried a promise of blessing for the people of Israel, was reaffirmed by Jesus. Do these principles have a place of prominence in the culture of your congregation? No less significant is the stewardship of the gifts of time, talent and capabilities of your congregation. One of the most striking biblical images of the church is that of the Body of Christ, where each member is entrusted with gifts of grace by the power of the Holy Spirit. Excellence in ministry is achieved when all members are using their gifts for the healthy growth of the whole Body. Finally, what values are held and taught regarding the spiritual growth of individuals in areas such as personal finances and physical well-being?

Other Questions:

Is stewardship defined in comprehensive terms in your church? Does your church have written statements which express core values, the most cherished beliefs and principles that guide your congregation? Do those values include the principles of tithing and generosity? Do those values include ideals that all members in the church should discover, develop and use their gifts, talents and skills in ministry? Do those values express a goal for the spiritual growth of individuals which includes stewardship of their personal lives?

Leadership/Teaching

Does the leadership of your church passionately articulate and model biblical understandings of stewardship and generosity? This is the single most important factor which will influence the patterns of giving and participation in your congregation. It begins with the Pastor. The words, teaching and personal example of the Pastor, supported by the visible and vocal commitment of other church leaders, will have powerful meaning and influence with the congregation. Teaching on comprehensive stewardship should occur year-round and be reinforced continuously in worship services, small groups, publications and other church activities.

Other questions:

Does the Pastor of your church believe in, teach and model the biblical principles of stewardship? Are the clergy and lay leaders of your church expected to make specific stewardship commitments? What is the per average per capita giving of the leaders of your church? Does the leadership of your church model values of tithing and generosity in relation to needs outside your own congregation? Does your church provide systematic teaching on spiritual gifts? Are the people of your congregation given opportunity to discover, develop and use their gifts, talents and skills in ministry? Are the people of your congregation taught and encouraged to more effectively manage their own financial, physical, occupational and spiritual well-being?

Purpose/Vision/Goals

Does your church have a clear sense of purpose, its reason for being? Have the leaders and members developed an ambitious, attainable vision for the next ten years, with specific measurable goals? Clarity of purpose, ownership of an exciting vision, and unity in pursuing common goals provide strong motivation for participation in and support of the church's ministries. Does your church make a periodic effort, such as a strategic planning process, to achieve such clarity?

Other questions

Does your church have a written statement of purpose and/or mission? Does your church have a written vision statement? Is the longer-term vision organized into shorter-term realistic, achievable goals? Are those goals written and well understood by leaders and members of the congregation?

Participation/Commitment

Does your church conduct an annual stewardship campaign as a component of a year-round stewardship program? A well-designed campaign will lift up the values of giving, bring focus to the vision and goals of the church's ministry, inspire people to participation and invite individuals to grow in their own giving. A key question will be whether your church is a tithing church or a pledging church. If you are a tithing church, do you have an annual focus that invites people to make a commitment to tithing? Many of the following question assume an annual pledging program. Tithing churches will need to adapt them as appropriate.

Other questions

Does your annual giving campaign have clear, written strategy objectives? Does your campaign focus on purpose, vision and mission rather than institutional needs and budget? Is your campaign message positive and biblical? What is the per capita average giving in your church? Are people of the congregation invited to grow their own giving every year? What percentage of the people of the congregation make an annual commitment? Is that percentage increasing year by year? Is the percentage of people who commit to actual tithing increasing year by year?

Planning/Evaluation

Does your church have a process of continuous evaluation and planning of your stewardship program? You cannot manage what you do not measure. At the heart of the planning process is the need for reliable information on the financial contributions and ministry participation of the congregation. This will help identify clear patterns and develop meaningful goals. Does your church set annual giving and participation goals, as part of an annual ministry plan?

Other Questions

Does your church maintain a database of contribution records for all donors? Do you use that database for a review and analysis of giving patterns in your congregation? Does your church maintain a database of the participation in ministry by the people of your church? Do you use that information to establish goals for increasing participation and improving the quality of ministry in your church? What were the strengths and weaknesses of this past year's program? What should be done differently in next year's program? Were the goals and objectives realistic? Most importantly, how could the overall stewardship program be improved?

Accountability/Communication

Does your church plan its annual budget based upon a plan of ministry with clear goals and objectives for the coming year? Is there a system of regular financial reporting and communication to the congregation on the progress of the ministry plan? Do you have written procedures for follow-up communication with contributors and those who have pledged? Does your church allow at least five percent of its annual budget for stewardship development?

Other questions

Does your church track pledges and send monthly or quarterly statements to donors? Are the statements simple and giver friendly, seeming more like a note of thank you and encouragement than a statement or bill?

Special Appeals

Is your congregation preparing for or involved in a capital campaign for the acquisition or development of church facilities? At any given time approximately 25% of all churches in the USA are involved in the special appeals of a capital campaign. If your church is not presently involved in such an effort, there is a good possibility you will be in the future, especially if you plan to grow. If that's the case, it's not too early to begin thinking about your next building fund campaign. Advance planning can help interface special appeals with your year-round efforts. While the contributions of members to the annual ministries of the church almost always are given from current income of the contributors, major gifts to special appeals often come from accumulated assets of donors. Such campaigns are very different from the annual stewardship campaign.

Other questions

Has your church completed a strategic long-range plan within the past three years? If you anticipate the need to finance new property or expansion of facilities within the next five to ten years, have you established a process to begin planning?



Stewardship Resources

compiled by Rev. Don Eastman: July 10, 1997

Highly recommended books

Callahan, Kennon L., *Effective Church Finances* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1992). An excellent guide by a well-known church development consultant. A companion book by the same author is *Giving and Stewardship in an Effective Church*. Callahan's earlier ground-braking book *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church* is a basic for strategic planning in the local church.

Grimm, Eugene, *Generous People* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992). Written by a stewardship specialist for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this book presents a comprehensive approach to encourage vital stewardship in a local church. It's an excellent guide for a year-round stewardship program.

Hoge, Dean R. et al., *Money Matters* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996). This book, written by a prominent religion sociologist, presents findings of a study of 625 churches in five major Christian denominations in the United States. It provides a wealth of information useful in determining a local church's approach to stewardship.

Joiner, Donald W. and Wimberly, Norma, *The Abingdon Guide to Funding Ministry* Volumes 1, 2 and 3, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995, 1996, 1997). These annual guides are filled with a wide variety of useful stewardship resources.

Schaller, Lyle, *44 Ways to Expand the Financial Base of Your Congregation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press 1989). After providing valuable insight on some basics of sound stewardship in the local church, this book is rich with ideas for fund-raising.

Audio Tapes

Maxwell, John C., *Proven Principles for Successful Stewardship* (San Diego: Injoy); This extremely popular seminar has been highly commended by several MCC Pastors. It includes six audio cassettes and seminar notes. Maxwell's resources are aimed at developing a comprehensive approach to stewardship with an clear emphasis on tithing. Several other tape cassette series on stewardship are also available. Order from Injoy, P.O. Box 1990, San Diego, California 92159-0900. The toll free phone number in the USA is 800-333-6505

Video

Barna, George, *How to Increase Giving in Your Church* (Ventura: Gospel Light, 1996). This 60 minute video and companion book features church marketing expert George Barna describing 14 principles for money-raising in the church. Order from Gospel Light, Ventura, California. The phone numbers are 800-446-7735 and 805-658-3388.

Internet Websites

www.easum.com

This is the site of church development consultant and author Bill Easum's 21st Century Strategies, Inc. It has lots of links to other websites and a huge list of resources for local church ministry including some items on stewardship. Note: select Networks then Websites for a quick path of links to other websites.

www.leadnet.org

This is the site of The Leadership Network, a leading network organization of megachurches which draws frequently from the expertise of people like Peter Drucker and Lyle Schaller and many of today's leading organizational and business experts. It has excellent resource lists and many links to other useful websites.

www.llano.net/net-results

This site features the resources of Herb Miller, widely recognized author and consultant on church effectiveness. Herb Miller's monthly journal, *Net Results*, is distributed by Cokesbury. Choose "How to reprint articles" to order a variety of reprint pacs including one on stewardship.

www.umc.org

This website of the United Methodist Church includes connection to two helpful UMC organizations: Discipleship Resources and Cokesbury Bookstore. Select Resources for Ministry to access these areas. Discipleship Resources has numerous stewardship resources. You can call Cokesbury at 800-672-1789

www.willowcreek.org

This is the site of the Willowcreek Association, associated with the huge megachurch near Chicago. It offers numerous resources for sale. Select Programming material; select Search by Keyword, choose "tithing" then "start search."

www.nazarene.org

Other churches and denominations often have useful information, although designed for the culture and structure of those organizations. A good example is the website of the Church of the Nazarene. To check it out, choose "Site Contents" then select Stewardship Development Ministries.

www.christianity.net

This is the site of Christianity Today, Inc. which is aligned primarily with conservative evangelical churches. CT is also the publisher of the popular journal *Leadership* and *Your Church* magazine. *Your Church* magazine frequently has stewardship information and resources. If you are a subscriber to America Online keyword "yc" will take you directly to *Your Church* magazine's AOL site.

Other Resources

Barrett, Wayne C., *More Money, New Money, Big Money* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1992). Creative strategies for funding today's church. Note: Discipleship Resources is an agency of the United Methodist Church. The address: Discipleship Resources, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, TN 37202. Phone 615-340-7068

Barrett, Wayne C., *The Church Finance Idea Book* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1989). Hundreds of proven ideas for funding your ministry, including information on capital campaigns, endowment funds, planned giving such as bequests and financial administration.

Piazza, Michael, *Growth or Death?* (Dallas: Sources of Hope Publishing, 1994). This book, by the Senior Pastor of Cathedral of Hope MCC, includes a Spiritual Gifts Self Discovery inventory. Order from Sources of Hope Bookstore, phone 214-351-1901.

C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1979). Identifying 27 spiritual gifts, this is an excellent foundation for the study of spiritual gifts.

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